

Opening markets and expending exports. To create more good jobs and increase wages, we must open markets abroad and expand U.S. exports. Trade has been key to the strength of this economic expansion—about a third of our economic growth in recent years has come from selling American goods and services overseas. The Information Technology Agreement signed in 1997 lowers tariff and other barriers to 90 percent of world trade in information technology services.

To continue opening new markets, creating new jobs, and increasing our prosperity, it is critically important to renew fast-track negotiation authority. This authority, which every President of either party has had for the last 20 years, enables the President to negotiate trade agreements and submit them to the Congress for an up-or-down vote, without modification. Renewing this traditional trade authority is essential to America's ability to shape the global economy of the 21st century.

SEIZING THE BENEFIT OF A GROWING, CHANGING ECONOMY

As we approach the 21st century the American economy is sound and strong, but challenges remain. We know that information and technology and global commerce are rapidly transforming the economy, offering new opportunities but also posing new challenges. Our goal must be to ensure that all Americans are equipped with the skills to succeed in this growing, changing economy.

Our economic strategy—balancing the budget, investing in our people, opening markets—has set this Nation on the right course to meet the goal. This strategy will support and contribute to America's strength and providing our people with the skills, the flexibility, and the security to succeed. We must continue to maintain the fiscal discipline that is balancing the budget, to invest in our people and their skills, and to lead the world to greater prosperity in the 21st century.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON,
THE WHITE HOUSE, *February 10, 1998.*

RANDOM DRUG TESTING FOR MEMBERS AND STAFF

(Mr. BARTON of Texas asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. BARTON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I just returned from the Republican Members' retreat at Williamsburg, Virginia, and at that retreat the Speaker of the House, the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. GINGRICH), unveiled goals for our generation, of which the No. 1 issue is a drug-free America.

To honor that goal, the gentleman from New York (Mr. SOLOMON) and I have been attempting for the last year to institute random drug testing for Members of Congress and their staffs, and the gentleman from New York (Mr. SOLOMON) and myself intend in the

next month and a half to actually implement the rule that was established at the start of this Congress that there shall be such a random drug testing plan for Members of Congress and their staffs.

Mr. Speaker, if we are going to have a drug-free America, the House of Representatives must set the positive example and must take such measures as necessary to ensure that the Congress itself is drug free, and in my opinion, random drug testing must be a part of that plan.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12 of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until 4 p.m.

Accordingly (at 3 o'clock and 28 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess until 4 p.m.

□ 1604

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. UPTON) at 4 o'clock and 4 minutes p.m.

REMOVAL OF NAME OF MEMBER AS COSPONSOR OF H.R. 2604

Mr. BERMAN. Mr. Speaker, pursuant to rule XXII, clause 4, I ask unanimous consent that my name be removed as a cosponsor of H.R. 2604.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from California?

There was no objection.

WELCOME BACK TO MS. HELEN SEWELL

(Mr. SOLOMON asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. SOLOMON. Mr. Speaker, as we welcome everybody back, I would like to make note that back in the kitchen, in the Republican cloakroom on this side, we have a wonderful woman who has been an employee of this House of Representatives for more than 65 years. Sixty-five years. She was sick over the break and she has returned in good health and we just want to welcome Mrs. Helen Sewell back. A wonderful, wonderful woman.

PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF MOTIONS TO SUSPEND THE RULES

Mr. SOLOMON. Mr. Speaker, by direction of the Committee on Rules, I call up House Resolution 352 and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

H. RES. 352

Resolved, That it shall be in order at any time on Wednesday, February 11, 1998, or on

Thursday, February 12, 1998, for the Speaker to entertain motions that the House suspend the rules. The Speaker or his designee shall consult with the minority leader or his designee on the designation of any matter for consideration pursuant to this resolution.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from New York (Mr. SOLOMON) is recognized for 1 hour.

Mr. SOLOMON. Mr. Speaker, for purposes of debate only, I yield the customary 30 minutes to the gentlewoman from my State of New York (Ms. SLAUGHTER), pending which I yield myself such time as I may consume. During consideration of this resolution, all time yielded is for the purpose of debate only.

Mr. Speaker, the rule before us today makes in order at any time on Wednesday, that is today, February 11th, and Thursday, February 12th, for the Speaker to entertain motions that the House suspend the rules. The resolution further provides that the Speaker or his designee shall consult with the minority leader or his designee on any suspension considered under this rule.

This rule is necessary in order to provide for the expeditious consideration of some noncontroversial legislation which is before the House this week. It would be impractical to bring this legislation up under separate resolutions from the Committee on Rules.

Mr. Speaker, the majority attempted to work with the minority to reach a unanimous consent agreement to allow for suspensions, that means the expediting of noncontroversial measures today and tomorrow. However, the minority objected to that request, for whatever reason, and without the unanimous consent agreement, this rule is necessary to allow us to take up this legislation today and tomorrow.

Mr. Speaker, earlier this week many Members of both the majority and the minority participated in legislative planning sessions for this coming year. Members used this time to thoughtfully come up with solutions to many of the challenges our Nation faces this year.

Republicans are intent on achieving a drug-free America, which is very, very important to me, make a safer and healthier environment for all of our children and our grandchildren. We plan on providing the best education system for America's students by providing parental choice in education, education savings accounts, and opportunity scholarships for students in the District of Columbia. But above all, we intend to make sure that this Federal Government does not dictate educational curriculum to States and local school districts.

We will also take a careful look at America's retirement system by creating a national commission on retirement, thus providing greater security for the future of our retirement system.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, Republicans intend to modernize, we intend to privatize and to downsize government in